



LOS ANGELES COUNTY REGIONAL PARK AND OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

December 15, 2009

The Honorable Board of Directors
Los Angeles County
Regional Park and Open Space District
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Directors:

**ALLOCATE COUNTY EXCESS FUNDS AVAILABLE
TO THE FIFTH SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT TO THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC
WORKS AND AUTHORIZE AWARD AND ADMINISTRATION OF A GRANT
TO THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY FLOOD CONTROL DISTRICT FOR THE
BIG TUJUNGA DAM SANTA ANA SUCKER HABITAT ENHANCEMENT PROJECT
(FIFTH DISTRICT) (3 VOTES)**

SUBJECT

Approval of the recommended actions will allocate \$500,000 in County Excess Funds, available to the Fifth Supervisorial District, to the Department of Public Works for a grant to the Los Angeles County Flood Control District for restoration and enhancement of the Santa Ana Sucker habitat, a threatened fish found along Tujunga Wash below Big Tujunga Dam.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD:

1. Find that the proposed project is categorically exempt under California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in accordance with the State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15301 (e), (i) and (m); and the revised County of Los Angeles Environmental Document Reporting Procedures and Guidelines, Class 1 (g), (l) and (w) as the project provides for restoration or replacement of existing facilities involving negligible or no expansion of use, and provides maintenance of wildlife habitat to protect endangered fish.

2. Allocate \$500,000 in County Excess Funds available to the Fifth Supervisorial District to the Department of Public Works for the Big Tujunga Dam Santa Ana Sucker Enhancement.
3. Authorize the Director of Parks and Recreation, in his capacity as Director of the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District, to award a grant in the amount of \$500,000 to the Los Angeles County Flood Control District (LACFCD) for the Big Tujunga Dam Santa Ana Sucker Habitat Enhancement Project after the County assigns the right to apply for funds to LACFCD, when applicable conditions have been met and to administer the grant as of the date of this action and pursuant to procedures in the Procedural Guide for Specified, Per Parcel and Excess Funds Projects.

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

Approval of the recommended actions will allocate \$500,000 in County Excess Funds, available to the Fifth Supervisorial District, for a grant to LACFCD for the Big Tujunga Dam Santa Ana Sucker Habitat Enhancement efforts as part of the Big Tujunga Dam Seismic Rehabilitation and Spillway Modification Project. These efforts will restore and enhance habitat for the Santa Ana Sucker, a federally-listed (threatened) native fish along Tujunga Wash below the Big Tujunga Dam. Big Tujunga Dam is undergoing a Seismic Rehabilitation and Spillway Modification that Department of Public Works (DPW) estimates will be completed by the end of 2010.

The proposed allocation of \$500,000 in Excess Funds will offset the cost of constructing the low flow valve, valve house, and control systems in support of the Santa Ana Sucker Habitat Enhancement effort.

The LACFCD's Big Tujunga Dam Santa Ana Sucker Habitat Enhancement Project consists of several elements: (1) determining beneficial flow regimes for the Santa Ana Sucker by conducting habitat suitability and fish population surveys in cooperation with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the United States Forest Service, the California Department of Fish and Game, and the City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power; (2) revising the operational guidelines for low-flow discharges from the dam, to achieve the beneficial flow regimes to the greatest extent feasible; and (3) implementing low-flow discharges using the new low-flow valve, valve house, and control system that will be installed at the dam to enable captured stormwater to be released in accordance with the newly developed beneficial flow regimes.

The 1996 Proposition requires that agencies to which funds were allocated under the Safe Neighborhood Parks Propositions of 1992 and 1996 encumber all such funds prior to receiving grants of Excess Funds. The DPW and LACFCD have met this requirement.

In a related item on today's agenda, the DPW, which is a qualified recipient of County Excess Funds under the 1996 Proposition, is requesting that your Board, in its capacity as the County's Board of Supervisors, approve this project and its funding; and that your Board, in its capacity as the governing body of the LACFCD, authorize the Chief Engineer of the LACFCD or her designee to apply for the grant funds for the Big Tujunga Dam Santa Ana Sucker Enhancement Project.

It is also recommended that the Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation (Director) be authorized to award a grant to LACFCD when applicable conditions have been met, such as grantee qualifications consistency between the projects and requirements of the 1996 Proposition, and grantee agreement with CEQA requirements for the project, and to administer the grant under procedures previously approved by your Board.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC GOALS

These actions are consistent with the County Strategic Plan Goals of Operational Effectiveness (Goal 1), and Community and Municipal Services (Goal 3). This action provides grant funds to augment the County's funding sources and will maximize the effectiveness of the County's public works infrastructure at the dam and result in quality regional open space for County residents.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

Sufficient appropriation for the grant, in the amount of \$500,000, is budgeted in the Fifth Supervisorial District portion of the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District Excess Funds Project Fund, HD6.

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

The 1996 Proposition provides a method for determining each fiscal year the amount of funds available in the following fiscal year to fund capital improvement projects in addition to the amounts specifically identified for projects in the Safe Neighborhood Parks Propositions of 1992 and 1996. The recommended grant would be funded from the Excess Funds available to the Fifth Supervisorial District from Excess Funds for County projects.

The Board may establish additional conditions on grants of Excess Funds. The Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation is authorized to award a grant when all applicable conditions have been met. Any funds allocated by the Board, but not encumbered by award of a grant contract in the same fiscal year, shall be available for allocation by the Board in the following fiscal year.

Your Board approved a Procedural Guide on June 2, 2009, to govern the administration of Regional Park and Open Space District grants. This Procedural Guide would appropriately govern the administration of the recommended additional grant as well.

CONTRACTING PROCESS

A Grant Project Agreement will be entered into, and administered under authority delegated to the Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation and pursuant to the Procedural Guide approved by the Board in 2009. The Project Agreement will be approved as to form by County Counsel.

IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)

These actions will have no impact on any other projects funded through the District but are required for the enhancement of habitat for the Santa Ana Sucker along Tujunga Wash below Big Tujunga Dam.

ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION

On January 31, 2006, Agenda No. 40, your Board adopted the Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) and Mitigation Monitoring Program prepared for the Big Tujunga Dam Seismic Rehabilitation Project. The construction of the new low-flow valve, valve house, and control systems is within the scope of the project addressed in that previously adopted Mitigated Negative Declaration.

The Honorable Board of Directors
December 15, 2009
Page 5

The proposed project is categorically exempt under California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in accordance with the State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15301 (e), (i) and (m); and the revised County of Los Angeles Environmental Document Reporting Procedures and Guidelines, Class 1 (g), (l) and (w) as the project provides for restoration or replacement of existing facilities involving negligible or no expansion of use, and provides maintenance of wildlife habitat to protect endangered fish.

CONCLUSION

Please instruct the Executive Officer-Clerk of the Board to return one conformed copy of this action to the Chief Executive Office, Capital Projects Division, and to the Department of Parks and Recreation.

Respectfully submitted,



Russ Guiney
Director, Parks and Recreation

RG:IV:RR:LB:REGIONALPARKANDOPENSPOCEDISTRICT(DPW BIG TUJUNGA BL)

c: Chief Executive Officer
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
Acting County Counsel